

Fourth Edition of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature*: notice of new provisions

The summary that follows this statement outlines some significant changes from the current Third (1985) Edition of the Code that are undergoing final drafting by the Editorial Committee of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature. These changes were agreed by the Commission at its 1996 meeting in Budapest, as reported in the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*, 53: 235–237, 240–243. Subsequently all the changes summarized here were confirmed, subject to detailed drafting, by a two-thirds majority of the Commission in an indicative postal vote. The finished text of the Code will be submitted to the Commission for a final vote of approval, as required by the Commission's Constitution.

The Fourth Edition of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature*, including these changes amongst others, will come into effect on 1 January 1999. The Third Edition of the Code will remain in force until then.

The purpose of this summary is to enable zoologists and others to become aware, in advance, of the major impending changes which might affect nomenclatural decisions on work currently in preparation which will not be published before 1 January 1999. These changes include requirements that authors must follow if new names published after 1998 are to be made available. The additional requirements for new names reflect what is widely accepted by modern zoologists as being good taxonomic practice.

When published, the Fourth Edition of the Code will have taken into account more than 500 written comments by zoologists (and groups of zoologists) made in response to a Discussion Draft that was distributed widely in 1995.

The new edition will reflect these comments. In part, these revealed an awareness that the rules must take into account changes in publishing methods (and, in particular, electronic information systems). More generally, the provisions will reflect an increased desire in the zoological community that the rules should provide measures that will, within reason, favour stability in the usage of names over strict chronological priority, providing always that taxonomic freedom of expression is maintained. There has also been strong public support for proposals to enable zoologists to find automatic solutions for many cases in which, under earlier editions of the Code, the only recourse was to seek a ruling from the Commission. Under the new Edition, recourse to the Commission will remain an option in cases of doubt or dispute. It will remain the prescribed course in cases in which individual action by an author would be more likely to hinder than promote a universally accepted outcome.

The Commission has, as a result of the responses, also extensively modified many of the proposals in the Discussion Draft. Therefore, the wording of no part of that document (even when the general principle concerned has been approved by the Commission) should be anticipated as that to be found in the Fourth Edition of the Code. In the face of strong opposition, some of the measures proposed in the Discussion Draft have been deleted. These include proposals to dispense with gender agreement between generic names and their combined epithets, to extend the principle of homonymy to names across all biological kingdoms, and to require the registration of all new names.

The changes listed in the summary below are published for advice only and must not be treated as though they were provisions of a Code. However, we publish them now to give a clear indication of impending changes that may affect such things as the availability of new names. If further information or clarification is required, advice may be sought from the Secretariat of the Commission (*ICZN, c/o The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, U.K.*; e-mail *iczn@nhm.ac.uk*).

A. Minelli

President

W.D.L. Ride

Chairman, Editorial Committee

Proposals of new names

1. A new name published after 1998 will not be made available unless it is explicitly indicated as being new (preferably by the use of a term such as 'sp. nov.', 'gen. nov.', 'fam. nov.', 'nom. nov.', or a directly equivalent term in the language in which the paper is written).

2. The proposal after 1998 of a new species-group nominal taxon will have to include the fixation for it of a name-bearing type (a holotype, a syntype series, or a hapantotype) in a manner that enables the subsequent recognition of that type (for example, by collection number).

3. When the name-bearing type of a species-group taxon proposed after 1998 consists of a preserved specimen or specimens, the proposal will be required to include a statement naming the public institution (not private collection) in which the name-bearing type will be deposited.

4. The proposal after 1998 of a new genus-group nominal taxon for an ichnotaxon (including trace fossils) will have to include the designation of a type species.

5. An author establishing a new family-group name after 1998 may adopt a stem of the name of the type genus which is not that derived from the genitive of the generic name according to strict grammar, and such a spelling is to be maintained by subsequent authors. For example, an author intending to establish a new family-group name which would be a homonym of an existing name, because the stems of the names of the respective type genera are identical, will be able (and is advised) to avoid homonymy by incorporating the entire name of the type genus into the spelling of the new family-group name.

Lectotype designations

6. Lectotype designations made after 1998 will be required to use the term 'lectotype' or a direct translation of it, and be accompanied by a statement to the effect that the designation is made with the purpose of clarifying the application of the name to a taxon.

Matters affecting neotypes

7. If a previously lost holotype, syntype or lectotype of a species subsequently typified by a neotype is rediscovered, the original type specimen(s) will automatically displace the neotype and become the name-bearing type. If this causes confusion or

instability an author should apply to the Commission for reinstatement of the neotype.

8. If the existing name-bearing type of a species-group taxon is indeterminate, so that the correct application of the name to a particular taxon is doubtful ('sp. indet.' or 'nom. dubium'), an author will be able to request the Commission to set it aside and designate a neotype.

Changes affecting publication

9. A work not printed on paper (e.g., on a laser disk) issued after 1998 in numerous identical, durable and unalterable copies may be regarded as published if supplemented by identical copies, printed on paper, and deposited in at least 10 named and internationally dispersed libraries.

10. For purposes of zoological nomenclature, the following kinds of material will be regarded as unpublished:

- (a) electronically distributed text or illustrations;
- (b) down-loaded copies or printouts of such material;
- (c) abstracts of papers, posters, lectures, etc., issued to participants at congresses, symposia and other meetings but not otherwise published;
- (d) offprints (separates) distributed after 1998 in advance of the date of publication specified in the work of which the offprint forms part.

Measures empowering authors to act in the interests of preserving established usage

11. An author will be required (without a ruling by the Commission) not to displace a name which has been used as valid by at least 10 authors in 25 publications during the past 50 years by an earlier synonym or homonym which has not been used as valid since 1899.

12. An author will be required to maintain the particular spelling currently in use for a name, even if it is found not to be the correct original spelling. For example, the spellings of family-group names currently in use will be maintained even if formed from incorrect grammatical stems.

13. If an author discovers that the type species fixation of a genus-group taxon was based on a misidentification of the type species, the author will be able, in the interests of stability and without making application to the Commission, to fix as type species either the taxonomic species actually involved or the misidentified nominal species fixed previously.

14. If it is found after 1998 that a name currently in general use for a family-group taxon is later than the name currently in use for one of its subordinate family-group taxa, the name used for the higher rank taxon is not to be displaced by the name of the subordinate taxon.